**Inclusive hiring toolkit:**

**A simple step-by-step guide for employers**

# Introduction

Welcome to your inclusive hiring toolkit! This guide is designed to help you create a recruitment process that attracts and retains diverse talent.

Embracing inclusivity not only benefits your organisation - bringing in a variety of perspectives and skills - but also contributes to a more equal society.

This toolkit offers step-by-step instructions, checklists and tips to help you on your journey towards a more inclusive workplace.

# Step-by-step guide to creating an inclusive recruitment process

## Step 1: Review and update D&I policies:

Regularly review your Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) policies to ensure they reflect current best practices and the evolving needs of your workforce. Update these policies to address any gaps and reinforce your commitment to inclusivity.

## Step 2: Assess your current recruitment process

Conduct an audit: Review your current recruitment practices to identify areas where bias may exist.

Partner with experts: Organisations such as Shaw Trust’s Good Work Places help employers create inclusive, supportive environments. This ensures your workplace is not just good, but great for all. They can help you gain a deeper understanding of potential biases in your recruitment process and support you with implementing best practices and developing a genuinely inclusive hiring strategy.

Gather feedback: Seek input from current employees and people you have interviewed about their experiences with your recruitment process. This is a valuable source of information that can yield new insights.

## Step 3: Define job requirements

Focus on skills: Emphasise the skills and experience necessary for the role, rather than formal qualifications that may exclude candidates from diverse backgrounds from applying.

Be specific: Clearly outline the job responsibilities and expectations to attract the right candidates.

Be flexible: Focus on what needs to be done, without being prescriptive about how this should be achieved.

## Step 4: Write inclusive job descriptions

Use inclusive language: Avoid gendered and overly-specialist language/jargon that may deter people from applying.

Use plain English: Make sure that everyone, including non-native speakers and those without industry-specific knowledge, can easily understand your job descriptions. This helps attract a more diverse range of candidates, making your job postings more inclusive and accessible.

Highlight inclusivity: Clearly state your commitment to diversity and inclusion in the job description.

## Step 5: Broaden your outreach

Diversify job boards: Post job openings on job boards and community forums that are designed to appeal to, and be accessible for a diverse range of communities.

Form effective partnerships: Collaborate with specialist organisations that support underrepresented groups and can support you to reach a wider talent pool.

## Step 6: Conduct inclusive interviews

Make people feel comfortable: Show you care by addressing people’s needs. Offer flexible interview formats, ask about accommodations, and ensure the space is welcoming. Small gestures like these help people feel at ease and valued.

Standardise questions: Use a consistent set of interview questions for all candidates to ensure fairness. Provide a clear scorecard or scoring sheet for interviewers to refer to and avoid subjective assessments of attributes such as organisational fit, character or personality.

Train interviewers: Provide training on recognising and mitigating unconscious bias.

Get expert inclusive recruitment advice: Partner with Good Work Partners to support your recruitment efforts and access a diverse talent pool. This will ensure that your hiring practices align with your commitment to diversity and inclusion.

## Step 7: Create an inclusive onboarding process

Offer mentorship: Pair new hires with appropriate mentors to help them navigate their new roles and feel welcomed. Mentorship provides existing employees the opportunity to showcase and develop their skills, whilst building the confidence of incoming staff.

Provide resources: Provide essential resources and support to all new employees from their first day. Make sure all materials are accessible to everyone, regardless of their needs.

# Checklists for removing bias from job descriptions and interviews

Create a fair and inclusive hiring process. Follow this checklist to remove bias from your job descriptions and interviews.

* Use gender-neutral language, such as they/them pronouns throughout the job description to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all applicants.
* Do not include unnecessary qualifications.
* Highlight your commitment to diversity and inclusion and show how this is lived within your organisation.
* Clearly outline job responsibilities and expectations.
* Emphasise skills and credibility over educational background.
* Avoid ageist language and practices, such as requiring a certain amount of experience.
* Offer job application materials in alternative formats (such as large print or mp3 recordings) and state how these can be requested.
* Provide at least two ways of contacting the hiring manager and/or the person responsible for adjustments.

Interview checklist

* Standardise interview questions for all candidates.
* Provide unconscious bias training for interviewers.
* Use a diverse interview panel.
* Evaluate candidates based on predefined criteria.
* Avoid questions that may reveal personal information unrelated to the job.

# Create an accessible and welcoming workplace

Make your employees feel valued and included. Use these simple tips to create a workplace that's accessible and welcoming to everyone.

## Physical accessibility

Ensure access: Make sure your workplace is accessible to disabled people by considering the built environment, the lighting and volume levels, wayfinding, and availability of essential resources such as bathrooms.

Accommodate needs: Provide reasonable accommodations, such as ergonomic workstations, assistive technology, and/or flexible working arrangements.

## Cultural accessibility

Celebrate diversity: recognise and celebrate diverse cultural holidays and events within your organisation.

Promote inclusion: encourage employees to share their cultural backgrounds and experiences.

Avoid assumptions: it should never be assumed that everyone will be celebrating a certain holiday or event.

Respect privacy: do not ask inappropriate questions about people’s private life, for example about marital status, gender or sexual orientation, or religious observance.

## Communication accessibility

Use clear language: ensure all your internal communications are in plain language and are simple to follow.

Provide alternatives: offer information in multiple formats, such as large print, braille, or digital text, to accommodate different requirements.

Check: ensure material has been accessibility checked according to relevant guidelines or involve specialist accessibility services.

## Creating a welcoming environment

Champion your D&I policy: Make sure you regularly review your policy, and make sure staff know how to access it. Communicate the key points consistently to help everyone stay aligned and committed to an inclusive workplace.

Foster community: create employee networks to support and represent various communities within your organisation.

Encourage feedback: establish channels for employees to provide feedback on their experiences and suggestions for improvement – both formal and informal.

Lead by example: ensure leaders show their commitment to inclusivity through their actions and policies.

Foster belonging: encourage staff from all levels to share their lived experiences, challenges, and successes to create an empathic, engaged workplace, where staff feel able to share.

# Summary

By following this inclusive hiring toolkit, you are taking important steps toward creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace. Remember, the journey to inclusivity is an ongoing process and it’s essential to continually assess and improve your practices.

Together, we can create a work environment where everyone feels valued and empowered to contribute their best.

# Need support to create a more inclusive workplace?

Discover how [Good Work Places](https://shawtrust.org.uk/good-work-places/) and [Good Work Partners](https://goodworkpartners.org.uk/) can help you unlock the potential of diverse talent. Start your journey today—get in touch and let’s build a stronger, more inclusive team together!

If you need this inclusive hiring toolkit in any other format, please email marketingteam@shaw-trust.org.uk